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SENATOR ALLARD REQUESTS \$15 MILLION FOR BENEFIT FOR ROCKY FLATS WORKERS

Energy Department delivers Allard report on Rocky Flats workers to Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, has requested \$15 million in the FY 2006 Energy Appropriations Bill to provide benefits for those Rocky Flats workers who would not have qualified for benefits because of the early completion of the cleanup at the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site (RFETS).

“The workers at RFETS have worked diligently to complete the cleanup of Rocky Flats a year ahead of schedule. Providing them with the retirement benefits they would have received had the Rocky Flats project continued to December 2006 is an appropriate reward for saving the American people over \$500 million in cleanup costs,” Senator Allard said.

“These workers have literally worked themselves out of a job,” he said, “and should not be penalized for their efficiency.”

Thursday, the U.S. Department of Energy released a report prepared at the behest of Senator Allard on the “Maintenance of Retirement Benefits for Certain Workers” at Rocky Flats and other nuclear weapons cleanup sites.

Last year, Senator Allard was successful in getting the report required in the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2005, in order to get a clearer picture of the pension, medical and other financial benefits that would be due to these workers who might be affected by an early closure of the Rocky Flats site. The report discusses remedies for workers at RFETS who will not receive retirement benefits because of the site’s early closure.

The report states: “Depending on which quarter Rocky Flats closes prior to the contract target date, the lump sum estimated value of unearned/unaccrued medical, life insurance and pension benefits would be between \$2.1 million and \$10.5 million. Up to 25 employees at Rocky Flats would be affected for pension benefits and up to 29 employees would be affected for health and life insurance plan coverage.”

“I have made this my number one energy appropriations priority. Not only do our Rocky Flats workers deserve fair treatment, but this appropriation would be a strong inducement for workers at other such sites to accelerate their cleanup activities,” Senator Allard said.